



# Racism in Children's Literature through Uncle Tom's Cabin

## Allyn Reynolds

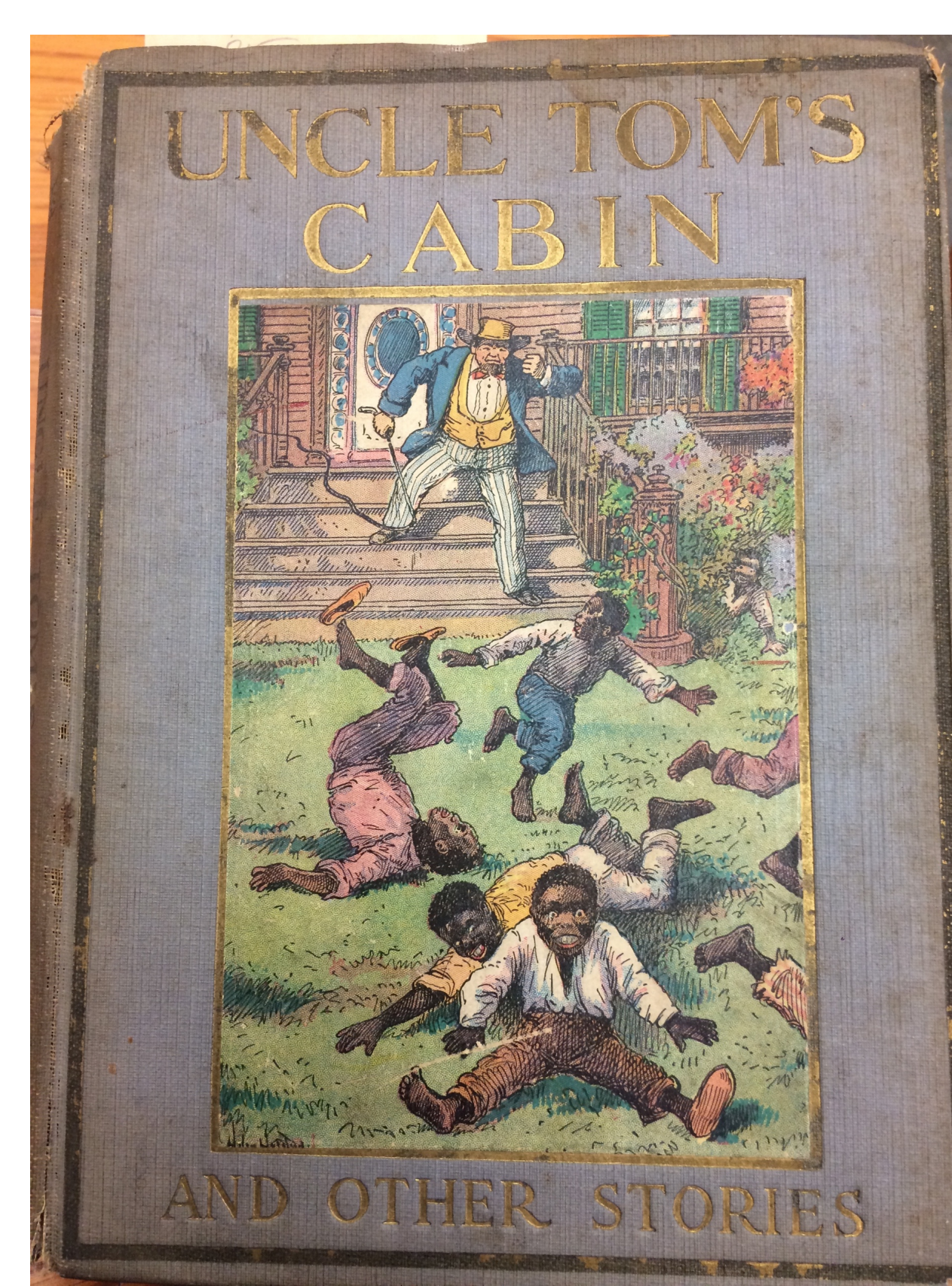
Mary Grtycko, Faculty Mentor and Clare Withers, Librarian Mentor

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### Introduction

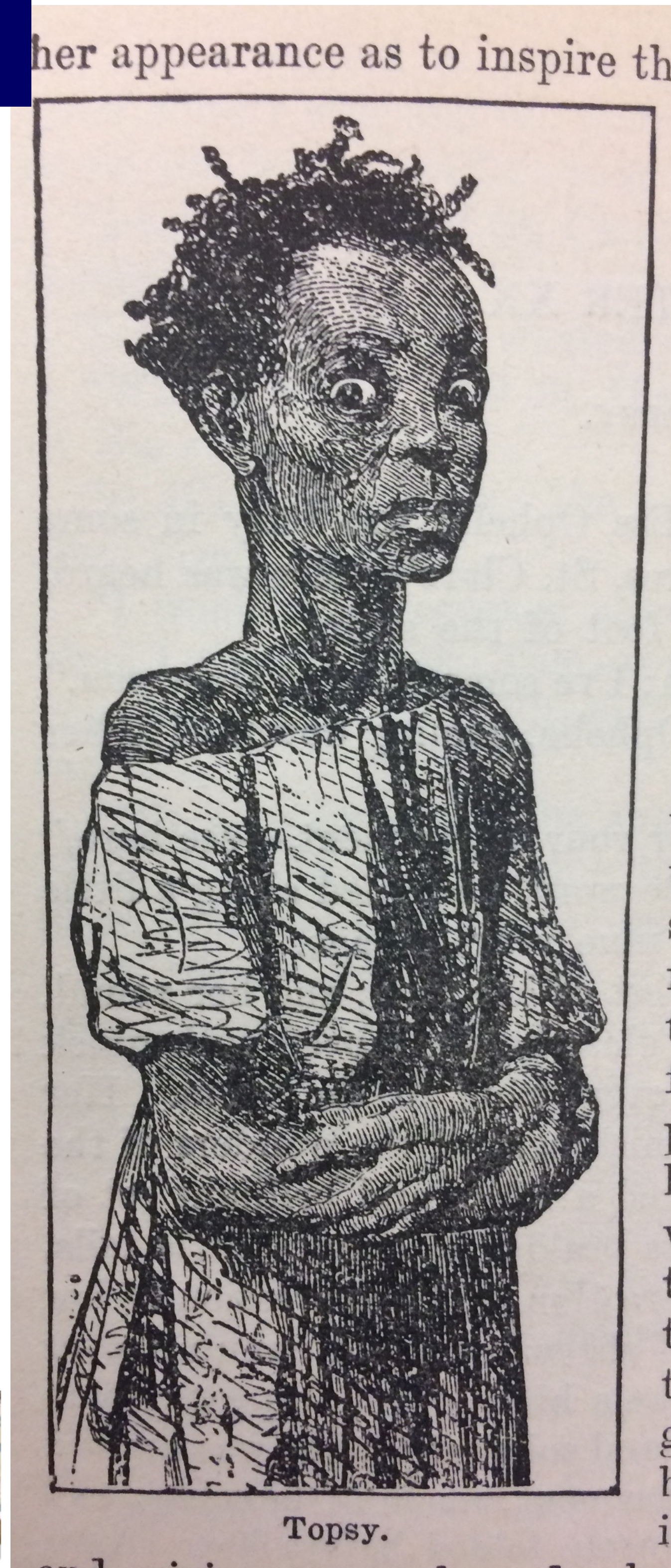
Uncle Tom's Cabin, the landmark abolitionist novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe, was published in 1852. Quickly, unauthorized versions targeted to children entered the market.

### Methods

Utilizing the Nesbitt and Curtis Collection, I was able to gather an array of materials pertaining to Uncle Tom's Cabin and its associated works for children. I worked through each work, making pertinent notes.

### Results

- Over fifty works pertaining to Uncle Tom's Cabin
- Most works struggle to tell the story of slavery to young children, and create racist propaganda in the process.
- Young Folks Uncle Tom's Cabin features a binary cover- the angelic white child versus the troublesome black child. Ends with Uncle Tom living due to the compassion of his original slave master who rescues him.
- Timeline JS created of Pitt works



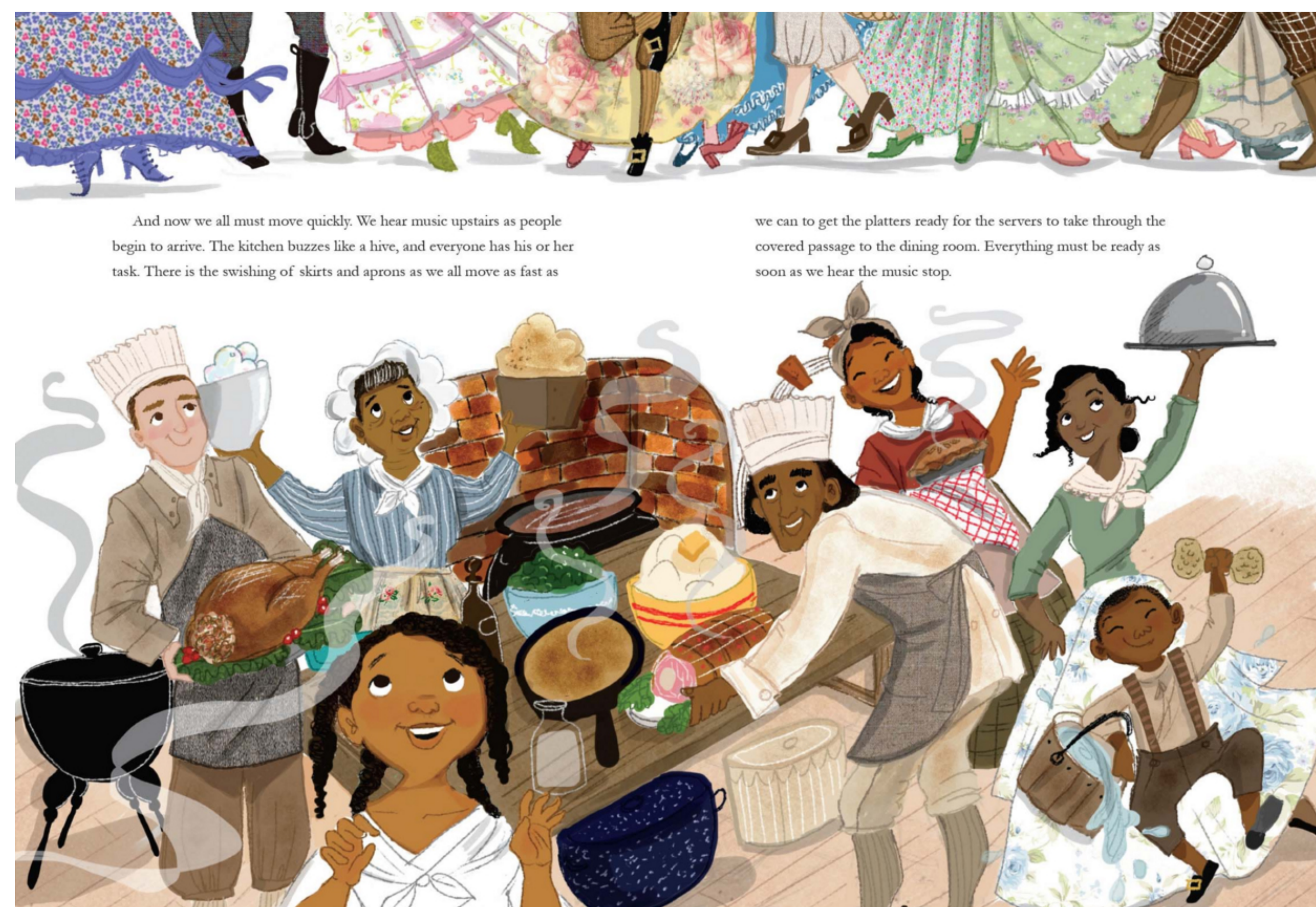
### Discussion

An often-neglected incubator of hateful messages is children's literature, where blatant misrepresentation or, more commonly, a lack of depiction at all, convey racist attitudes to America's most vulnerable population: its children. Children's literature has largely remained stagnant with depictions of African-Americans still transmitting altered historical narratives. Afterall, if children of color cannot find themselves in stories, doesn't it communicate to them on their value in society?



### Acknowledgements

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Modern children's book featuring happy slaves.

